

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05
H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02
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R 081453Z MAR 78
FM AMEMBASSY LAGOS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7001
INFO AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM
AMEMBASSY GABORONE
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY LILONGWE
AMMBASSY LUSAKA 1373
AMEMBASSY MAPUTO
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA
AMCONSUL CAPETOWN
AMCONSUL IBADAN
AMCONSUL KADUNA
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

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CAPETOWN FOR EMBASSY

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PDEV SOPN RH NI
SUBJECT: RHODESIA: NIGERIAN PRESS REACTION TO INTERNAL SETTLEMENT

1. NIGERIAN PRESS REACTION TO THE INTERNAL SETTLEMENT WAS A
SURPRISING NELLANGE OF COMMENTARY RANGING FROM CAUTIOUS SUPPORT
TO STRONG CONDEMNATION. AWOLOWO'S NIGERIAN TRIBUNE PROVIDED
THE GREATEST SURPRISE OFFERING A 'CAUTIOUS WELCOME' SAYING
THAT THE 'AGREEMENT IS A STEP FORWARD IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION.' IF
NOTHING CHANGES THE PROPOSED DATE FOR TRANSFER OF POWER AND
THE ACDEPTANCE OF UNIVERSAL ADULT SUFFRAGE, THE TRIBUNE SAYS
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'IT IS EASY TO FOREBEAR THE UNSAVORURY ASPECTS OF THE AGREEMENT.'
IT ALSO CALLS ON THE PATRIOTIC FRONT (PF) TO ACCEPT THE
AGREEMENT AND URGES THE OAU AND THE NIGERIAN GOVERNMENT TO PERSUADE
THEM TO DO SO. IT WARNS THE PF THAT AFTER THE ELECTION THE
'LEGITIMATE GOVERNMENT OF ZIMBABWE.... WOULD HAVE A RIGHT TO
SYMPATHY AND SUPPORT OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY.'

2. THE DAILY SKETCH STOPPED SHORT OF SUPPORTING THE AGREEMENT, BUT DID URGE THE OAU TO WORK OUT A COMPROMISE BETWEEN THE PF AND INTERNAL BLACK NATIONALISTS SO THAT THEY CAN SHARE POWER AFTER DECEMBER 31. IT URGED THE OAU TO PERSUADE MUGABE AND NKOMO TO RETURN TO ZIMBABWE TO TAKE PART IN THE GENERAL ELECTION FOR PARLIAMENT, 'PROVIDED IT IS SUPERVISED BY AN INTERNATIONAL BODY.'

3. THE DAILY TIMES WAS MORE CRITICAL OF THE AGREEMENT SAYING, 'THE SO-CALLED ZIMBABWE AGREEMENT SHOULD NOT BE GIVEN A TRIAL BECAUSE IT IS A SHAM.' AT THE SAME TIME IT CALLED ON THE OAU TO URGE THE PF TO 'START TALKING TO MODERATES IN ZIMBABWE.' TIMES ALSO FOUND IT 'DISTURBING' THAT THE US AND THE UK ARE 'NOW PREPARING TO WELCOME THE INTERNAL SETTLEMENT.' IT CALLED SUCH A MOVE AN 'ABDICATION OF BRITAIN'S RESPONSIBILITY...; A DEMONSTRATION OF THEIR INSINCERITY...; A REVERSAL OF THEIR POLICY OF SUPPORTING THE RIGHT OF SELF-DETERMINATION... AND A ...TOTAL LACK OF MORAL SCRUPLE.'

4. NIGERIAN HERALD AND NEW NIGERIAN STRONGLY CONDEMNED THE AGREEMENT. THE HERALD CALLED THE AGREEMENT'S TRICKY ESCAPE BY IAN SMITH FROM THE PRESSURE OF THE LIBERATION FORCES.' IT SAID THAT MUSEREWA AND COMPANY, 'BLINDED BY THEIR UNUSUAL CLAMOR FOR POWER... HAVE FURTHER COMPLICATED THE PATH TO AN HONORABLE INDEPENDENCE FOR ZIMBABWE; WORSE STILL, THEY HAVE AIDED WHITE RACISTS IN SOUTHERN AFRICA...'
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5. THE NEW NIGERIAN SAID, JMWE ARE AT A LOSS AS TO WHY THE UNITED NATIONS SHOULD EVEN DEEM IT WORTH ITS WHILE TO CONSIDER THE SO-CALLED AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE ILLEGAL REGIME AND SOME OF ITS STOOGES.' IT CALLED FOR THE FRONT LINE STATES TO ESTABLISH A 'PATRIOTIC FRONT GOVERNMENT-IN-EXILE' AND FOR THE OAU TO GIVE 'FULL, MORAL AND MATERIAL SUPPORT TO THIS GOVERNMENT..UNTIL THE PATRIOTIC FRONT GOVERNMENT IS FINALLY INSTALLED IN SALIBURY.
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